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EXAMINER	
LEE, PHILIP C	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2154	3

DATE MAILED: 10/27/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/649,974	BUFFALO ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Philip C Lee	2154	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *29 August 2000* .

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-29* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-29* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11)☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a)☐ approved b)☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) *2* .
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: .

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-30 are presented for examination.

2. It is noted that although the present application does contain line numbers in the specification and claims, the line numbers in the claims do not correspond to the preferred format. The preferred format is to number each line of every claim, with each claim beginning with line 1. For ease of reference by both the Examiner and Applicant all future correspondence should include the recommended line numbering.

3. The specification is objected to because of the following informalities and grammar errors, page 16 (lines 4 and 5), "Maintenance Program Scheduler 201" [i.e. no Maintenance Program Scheduler 201 in the figures], page18 (line 1), "inset box 328", [i.e. no inset box 328 in the figures]. Appropriate correction is required.

4. The numbering of claims is not in accordance with 37 CFR 1.126 which requires the numbering of the claims must be consecutively beginning with the number next following the highest numbered claims previously presented, and the dependent claims cannot depend on the claim that has not been presented.

Misnumbered claims 28-30 have been renumbered 27-29 respectively.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 112

5. Claims 1-7, 12 and 26-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

a. Claim language in the following claims is not clearly understood:

i. As per claim 1, lines 6 and 10, it is uncertain what is the relationship between each automatic software program and at least one predetermined maintenance software program [i.e. are they the same programs?].

ii. As per claim 3, lines 1-2, it is unclear if "the predetermined maintenance software programs" refers to "the at least one of predetermined maintenance software program" in claim 1, line 10.

iii. As per claim 4, line 2, it is unclear if "a gateway" refers to "a gateway" in claim 2, lines 9 [i.e. if they are the same then a "said" or "the" must be used].

iv. As per claim 12, line 5, it is not clearly understood if "an automatic program reporting program" refers to "an automatic progress reporting program" in claim 11, line 13 [i.e. are they the same programs?].

v. As per claim 26, lines 29, it is not complete.

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1, 3-5 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kidder et al, U.S. Patent 6,445,774 (hereinafter Kidder) in view of Cogger et al, U.S. Patent 6,032,184 (hereinafter Cogger).

8. As per claim 1, Kidder taught the invention as claimed for automatically providing infrastructure maintenance response to a customer form/report/ticket in a communications network that includes a core communications service, comprising:

a Work-Flow Manager, arranged to trigger, for each customer form/report/ticket, each automatic software program of a plurality of automatic software programs in response to an associated milestone event for the customer form/report/ticket (405 and 418, figure 4; col. 14, lines 24-62); and

a Maintenance Program Scheduler, coupled to the Work-Flow Manager, for invoking at least one predetermined maintenance software program based upon predetermined criteria being met by the form/report/ticket (417, figure 4; col. 10, lines 40-62).

9. Kidder did not teach a communication network comprising an Access Provider service. Cogger taught the invention for providing infrastructure maintenance response to a customer form/report/ticket in a communications network that includes an Access Provider services (col. 16, lines 28-34).

10. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder and Cogger because Cogger's method of providing Access Provider services would enhanced the attractiveness of Kidder's automatic customer maintenance system by providing an all inclusive service request contact point. Therefore, service requests relating to any service organizations are sent to a single location (col. 16, lines 34-38).

11. As per claim 3, Kidder taught the invention substantially as claimed in claim 1 above, wherein the predetermined maintenance software programs for the maintenance program scheduler include:

an automatic closing program (col. 16, lines 26-31).

12. Kidder did not teach the predetermined maintenance software programs for the maintenance program scheduler include a progress reporting program. Cogger taught a customer maintenance system wherein the predetermined maintenance software programs include:

an progress reporting program (col. 15, lines 34-38).

13. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder and Cogger because Cogger's method of including an progress reporting program would increase the convenience of the customer in Kidder's automatic customer maintenance system by allowing the customer to identify the status of the form/report/ticket (col. 2, lines 42-46).

14. As per claim 4, Kidder and Cogger taught the invention substantially as claimed in claim 1 above. Cogger further taught that the Access Provider service is implemented using a gateway for access that is coupled to a data communication network of the communications network (figure 4; col. 10, lines 16-25; col. 16, lines 28-34).

15. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder and Cogger because Cogger's method of providing Access Provider service using a gateway for access would increase the usability of Kidder's automatic customer maintenance system by allowing communication between the automatic customer maintenance system and Access Providers that use different communications protocols.

16. As per claim 5, Kidder and Cogger taught the invention substantially as claimed in claim 1 above. Kidder further taught a system wherein a custom care Platform that is coupled to a data communication network that delivers the customer form/report/ticket to a Business Maintenance

Platform for processing in accordance with at least the automatic software programs (col. 10, lines 8-16).

17. Kidder did not teach the customer form/report/ticket is initiated by an agent in a Custom Care Platform. Cogger taught the invention wherein the customer form/report/ticket is initiated by an agent in a Custom Care Platform (col. 12, lines 45-52).

18. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder and Cogger because Cogger's method of allowing an agent to initiate a customer form/report/ticket would increase the efficiency of Kidder's automatic customer maintenance system by allowing the agent to initiate a customer form/report/ticket if the agent of the customer maintenance system detects a network event first.

19. As per claim 7, Kidder and Cogger did not detail the parallel configuration in which the system components are coupled. However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the configuration of the automatic customer maintenance system wherein the Business Maintenance Platform is coupled in parallel to a data communication network, service provisioning systems, a work management systems, a billing system, and a gateway because the parallel configuration is a design choice of the inventor. Moreover, other configuration modifications may be made without deviating from the function of the automatic customer maintenance system.

20. Claims 2, 6 and 8-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kidder and Cogger in view of Jones et al, U.S. Patent 5,946,372 (hereinafter Jones).

21. As per claim 2, Kidder and Cogger taught the invention substantially as claimed in claim 1 above. Kidder taught the invention wherein the plurality of automatic software programs include:

an automatic linking program for automatically linking the customer with an area to solve a problem (col. 8, lines 26-49);

an automatic notification program for automatically notifying a maintenance technician when the problem requires further analysis (col. 5, lines 58-61; col. 6, lines 66-col. 7, lines 1);

an automatic customer notification program for automatically conveying clearance information for the customer (col. 9, lines 61-col. 10, lines 7); and

an automatic closing program for automatically checking for tickets that have been conveyed to the customer (col. 16, lines 26-31).

22. Kidder did not teach other automatic software programs. However, Cogger taught the invention wherein the plurality of automatic software programs include:

an automatic referral program for automatically referring the problem to the access provider service via a gateway (col. 16, lines 6-13);

an automatic preparation for clearance program for automatically populating clearance information and analysis codes on the ticket based on a diagnosis conclusion sent by the access provider service (col. 16, lines 13-18);

an automatic progress reporting program for automatically determining when a status is owed to the customer (col. 15, lines 34-38);

23. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder and Cogger because Cogger's system of referral program, preparation for clearance program and progress reporting program would enhanced Kidder's automatic customer maintenance system by providing additional customer maintenance system tools for interactive trouble reporting and monitoring (col. 1, lines 16-20).

24. Kidder and Cogger did not specifically detailing other automatic software programs. However, Jones taught the invention wherein the plurality of automatic software programs include:

an automatic diagnosing program for providing automatic diagnosis (col. 3, lines 5-11; col. 9, lines 6-18);

an automatic verification program for automatically verifying if the problem has been fixed (col. 15, lines 34-39).

25. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder, Cogger and Jones because Jones's system with a

test unit for testing communication network would increase the efficiency of Kidder's and Cogger's systems by allowing customer maintenance system to automatically test and to automatically verify that the circuits are operational when the customer maintenance system detects a network event prior to customer notification (col. 1, lines 66-col. 2, lines 10).

26. As per claim 6, Kidder and Cogger taught the invention substantially as claimed as in claim 5 above. Kidder further taught the Business Maintenance Platform includes:

a Database for storing circuit and customer information (col. 8, lines 62-67);

a ticket Unit for processing the customer form/report/ticket (col. 8, lines 59-62);

an Alarm Unit for recording problems that the system detects in the network (col. 8, lines 6-9); and

an Event Unit having a Work-Flow Manager and a plurality of computer programs/engines, wherein the Event Unit is used for monitoring events and initiating activities based on events (col. 14, lines 24-62).

27. Kidder and Cogger did not teach the Business Maintenance Platform includes a Test Unit for testing a selected infrastructure portion of the communications network. Jones taught a Test Unit for testing a selected infrastructure portion of the communications network (col. 9, lines 6-22).

28. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder, Cogger and Jones because Jones's system with a

test unit for testing communication network would increase the efficiency of Kidder's and Cogger's systems by allowing customer maintenance system to test and to verify that the circuits are operational when the customer maintenance system detects a network event prior to customer notification (col. 1, lines 66-col. 2, lines 10).

29. As per claim 8, Kidder taught the invention as claimed having a Business Maintenance Platform for automatically providing infrastructure maintenance in response to a customer form/report/ticket in a communications network that includes a core communications service (col. 4, lines 11-22), the Business Maintenance Platform comprising:

a Database, for storing information related to circuits and customer information (col. 8, lines 62-67);

a ticket unit, for processing the customer form/report/ticket (col. 8, lines 59-62);

an Alarm Unit, for recording problems that the system detects in the network (col. 8, lines 6-9); and

an event unit having a work-flow manager and a plurality of computer programs/engines, wherein the event unit is used for monitoring events and initiating activities based on events (col. 14, lines 24-62).

30. Kidder did not teach a communication network comprising an Access Provider service. Cogger taught the invention for providing infrastructure maintenance response to a customer

form/report/ticket in a communications network that includes an Access Provider services (col. 16, lines 28-34).

31. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder and Cogger because Cogger's method of providing Access Provider services would enhanced the attractiveness of Kidder's automatic customer maintenance system by providing an all inclusive service request contact point. Therefore, service requests relating to any service organizations are sent to a single location (col. 16, lines 34-38).

32. Kidder and Cogger did not teach the Business Maintenance Platform includes a Test Unit for testing a selected infrastructure portion of the communications network. Jones taught a Test Unit for testing a selected infrastructure portion of the communications network (col. 9, lines 6-22).

33. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder, Cogger and Jones because Jones's system with a test unit for testing communication network would increase the efficiency of Kidder's and Cogger's systems by allowing customer maintenance system to automatically test and to automatically verify that the circuits are operational when the customer maintenance system detects a network event prior to customer notification (col. 1, lines 66-col. 2, lines 10).

34. Kidder, Cogger and Jones did not detail the configuration in which the system components are coupled. However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the automatic customer maintenance system, wherein the database, the ticket unit, the test unit, the alarm unit and the event unit are coupled in parallel to a data communication network, service provisioning systems, a work management systems, a billing system, and a gateway to an Access Provider because the configuration is a design choice of the inventor. Moreover, other configuration modifications may be made without deviating from the function of the automatic customer maintenance system.

35. As per claim 15, Kidder taught the invention as claimed for automatically providing infrastructure maintenance in response to a customer form/report/ticket in a communications network that includes a core communications service (col. 4, lines 11-22), comprising the steps of:

notifying the customer that the system has repaired the problem (col. 9, lines 61-col. 10, lines 7); and

closing out the ticket/repair request upon successful repair of the problem (col. 16, lines 26-31).

36. Kidder did not teach a communication network comprising an Access Provider service. Cogger taught the invention for providing infrastructure maintenance response to a customer form/report/ticket in a communications network that includes an Access Provider services (col. 16, lines 28-34), comprising the steps of:

generating a ticket/customer repair request regarding a problem (col. 12, lines 45-52); generating clearance and analysis codes (col. 16, lines 13-18).

37. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder and Cogger because Cogger's system of referral program, preparation for clearance program and progress reporting program would enhanced Kidder's automatic customer maintenance system by providing additional customer maintenance system tools for interactive trouble reporting and monitoring (col. 1, lines 16-20).

38. Kidder and Cogger did not teach the method comprising the steps of diagnosing and verifying the problem. Jones taught the method comprising the steps of diagnosing the problem (col. 3, lines 5-11; col. 9, lines 6-18) and testing to determine whether the problem has been fixed (col. 15, lines 34-39).

39. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder, Cogger and Jones because Jones's method of testing and verifying the problem would increase the efficiency of Kidder's and Cogger's systems by allowing customer maintenance system to automatically test and to automatically verify that the circuits are operational when the customer maintenance system detects a network event prior to customer notification (col. 1, lines 66-col. 2, lines 10).

40. As per claim 26, Kidder taught the invention substantially as claimed for providing infrastructure maintenance in response to a customer form/report/ticket in a communication network that includes a core communication service (col. 4, lines 11-22), comprising the steps of utilizing software programs for automatically:

> providing an update to the customer, by one of an interactive voice response system and an email, indicating that the problem is fixed (col. 9, lines 61-col. 10, lines 7); and diagnosing the circuit problem and, where the circuit problem has been fixed, initiating clearing of the ticket (col. 16, lines 26-31), and determining that manual intervention by a maintenance technician is needed, sending an electronic message to the maintenance technician alerting the maintenance technician to the need for repair (col. 5, lines 58-61; col. 6, lines 66-col. 7, lines 2).

41. Kidder did not teach a communication network comprising an Access Provider service. Cogger taught the invention for providing infrastructure maintenance response to a customer form/report/ticket in a communications network that includes an Access Provider services (col. 16, lines 28-34), comprising the steps of:

> preparing, by one of a customer and an agent, a customer form/report/ticket concerning a circuit problem and sending the customer form/report/ticket to a Business Maintenance platform (col. 12, lines 45-52),

determining whether the circuit problem reported has been caused by a higher level facility/equipment/lower level circuit problem, and where the circuit problem relates to higher level facility/equipment, automatically preparing a second ticket for the higher level facility/equipment and correlating the customer form/report/ticket and the second ticket with respect to updates (col. 16, lines 3-26);

where the customer confirms that the circuit problem is fixed, closing out the ticket (col. 16, lines 48-54);

where the problem exits in the Access provider's portion of the circuit, automatically sending an electronic referral to an Access Provider (col. 16, lines 3-26);

where the circuit problem has been repaired, pre-populating clearance information and analysis codes on the customer form/report/ticket to indicate that the circuit problem has been repaired (col. 16, lines 13-18).

42. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder and Cogger because Cogger's system of referral program, preparation for clearance program and progress reporting program would enhanced Kidder's automatic customer maintenance system by providing additional customer maintenance system tools for interactive trouble reporting and monitoring (col. 1, lines 16-20).

43. Kidder and Cogger did not teach the method comprising the steps of diagnosing and verifying the problem. Jones taught the method comprising the steps of:

sending, upon the Access Provider's/the maintenance technician's completion of the repair, a message requesting verification that the problem has been fixed (col. 3, lines 5-11; col. 9, lines 6-18);

testing and performing alarm checks to determine if the circuit problem has been repaired (col. 15, lines 34-39).

44. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder, Cogger and Jones because Jones's method of testing and verifying the problem would increase the efficiency of Kidder's and Cogger's systems by allowing customer maintenance system to test and to verify that the circuits are operational when the customer maintenance system detects a network event prior to customer notification (col. 1, lines 66-col. 2, lines 10).

45. As per claim 9, Kidder, Cogger and Jones taught the invention substantially as claimed in claim 8 above. Kidder further taught a system wherein a custom care Platform that is coupled to a data communication network that delivers the customer form/report/ticket to a Business Maintenance Platform for processing (col. 10, lines 8-16).

46. Kidder did not teach the customer form/report/ticket is initiated by an agent in the Custom Care Platform. Cogger taught a system wherein the Business Maintenance Platform is coupled to a Customer Care Platform wherein the customer form/report/ticket is initiated by an agent in the Custom Care Platform (col. 12, lines 45-52).

47. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder and Cogger because Cogger's method of allowing an agent to initiate a customer form/report/ticket would increase the efficiency of Kidder's automatic customer maintenance system by allowing the agent to initiate a customer form/report/ticket if the agent of the customer maintenance system detects a network event first.

48. As per claim 10, Kidder, Cogger and Jones taught the invention substantially as claimed in claim 9 above. Kidder further taught a system wherein processing includes utilizing a plurality of automatic software programs (col. 10, lines 8-16).

49. As per claims 11, 18-25 and 27-29, Kidder, Cogger and Jones taught the invention substantially as claimed as in claims 2, 10, 15 and 26 above. Kidder further taught a system wherein the plurality of automatic software programs include:

an automatic linking program for automatically linking the customer with an area to solve a problem (see Kidder, col. 8, lines 26-49);

an automatic notification program for automatically notifying a maintenance technician when the problem requires further analysis (see Kidder, col. 5, lines 58-61; col. 6, lines 66-col. 7, lines 1);

an automatic customer notification program for automatically conveying clearance information for the customer (see Kidder, col. 9, lines 61-col. 10, lines 7);

an automatic closing program for automatically checking for tickets that have been conveyed to the customer (see Kidder, col. 16, lines 26-31).

50. Kidder did not teach other automatic software programs. However, Cogger taught the invention wherein the plurality of automatic software programs include:

an automatic referral program for automatically referring the problem to the access provider service via a gateway (see Cogger, col. 16, lines 6-13);
an automatic preparation for clearance program for automatically populating clearance information and analysis codes on the ticket based on a diagnosis conclusion sent by the access provider service (see Cogger, col. 16, lines 13-18);
an automatic progress reporting program for automatically determining when a status is owed to the customer (see Cogger, col. 15, lines 34-38).

51. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder and Cogger because Cogger's system of referral program, preparation for clearance program and progress reporting program would enhanced Kidder's automatic customer maintenance system by providing additional customer maintenance system tools for interactive trouble reporting and monitoring (col. 1, lines 16-20).

52. Kidder and Cogger did not specifically detailing other automatic software programs. However, Jones taught the invention wherein the plurality of automatic software programs include:

an automatic diagnosing program for providing automatic diagnosis (see Jones, col. 3, lines 5-11; col. 9, lines 6-9);

an automatic verification program for automatically verifying if the problem has been fixed (see Jones, col. 15, lines 34-39).

53. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder, Cogger and Jones because Jones's system with a test unit for testing communication network would increase the efficiency of Kidder's and Cogger's systems by allowing customer maintenance system to automatically test and to automatically verify that the circuits are operational when the customer maintenance system detects a network event prior to customer notification (col. 1, lines 66-col. 2, lines 10).

54. As per claim 12, Kidder, Cogger and Jones taught the invention substantially as claimed as in claims 3 and 8 above. Kidder further taught a system wherein time-based maintenance software programs are initiated at predetermined times by a maintenance program scheduler that is coupled to the Business Maintenance Platform (417, figure 4; col. 10, lines 40-62), the time-based maintenance software programs including:

an automatic closing program for automatically checking for tickets that have been conveyed to the customer (col. 16, lines 9-34).

55. Kidder did not teach the predetermined maintenance software programs for the maintenance program scheduler include an automatic program reporting program. Cogger taught a customer maintenance system wherein the time-based maintenance software programs include:

an automatic program reporting program for automatically determining when a status is owed to the customer (col. 15, lines 34-38).

56. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder and Cogger because Cogger's method of including a program reporting program would increase the convenience of the customer in Kidder's automatic customer maintenance system by allowing the customer to identify the status of the form/report/ticket (col. 2, lines 42-46).

57. As per claim 13, Kidder, Cogger and Jones taught the invention substantially as claimed in claims 4 and 8 above. Cogger further taught that the core communications service is monitored using a customer gateway for Web access that is coupled to a data communication network of the communications network (figure 5; col. 10, lines 16-25; col. 16, lines 28-34).

58. As per claims 14 and 17, Kidder, Cogger and Jones taught the invention substantially as claimed as in claims 5, 8 and 15 above. Kidder further taught a system wherein a custom care Platform is coupled to a data communication network that delivers the customer form/report/ticket to a Business Maintenance Platform for processing in accordance with at least the automatic software programs (col. 10, lines 8-16).

59. Kidder did not teach the customer form/report/ticket is initiated by an agent in a Custom Care Platform. Cogger taught the invention wherein the customer form/report/ticket is initiated by an agent in a Custom Care Platform (col. 12, lines 45-52).

60. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Kidder and Cogger because Cogger's method of allowing an agent to initiate a customer form/report/ticket would increase the efficiency of Kidder's automatic customer maintenance system by allowing the agent to initiate a customer form/report/ticket if the agent of the customer maintenance system detects a network event first.

61. As per claim 16, Kidder, Cogger and Jones taught the invention substantially as claimed as in claim 15 above, wherein generating a ticket/customer repair request regarding a problem is accomplished by a customer (see Cogger, col. 12, lines 53-60) and the ticket is transmitted to a Business Maintenance Platform for automatic infrastructure maintenance processing (see Kidder, col. 10, lines 8-16).

CONCLUSION

62. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Tentij et al, U.S. Patent 6,513,129, disclosed a fault management system comprising a gateway.

Adams et al, U.S. Patent 6,449,341, disclosed a trouble tickets maintenance system comprising a call center.

Devine et al, U.S. Patent 6,631,402, disclosed a reporting system comprising a report manager, report scheduler and report requestor applications.

63. A shortened statutory period for reply to this Office action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action.

64. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Philip C Lee whose telephone number is (703)305-7721. The examiner can normally be reached on 8 AM TO 5 PM Monday to Thursday and every other Friday.

65. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Meng Ai An can be reached on (703)305-9678. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

66. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)350-6121.

P.L.
October 16, 2003

P.L.

ZARNI MAUNG
PRIMARY EXAMINER